Fan Backlash, Activists, New Love, and the Horrors of War: Mira, Zoey, Rumi, Bobby, and Huntrix's Dilemma

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Fan Backlash, Activists, New Love, and the Horrors of War: Mira, Zoey, Rumi, Bobby, and Huntrix's Dilemma

by lefemmerouge

Summary

At a press conference to celebrate their new album, "How It's Done: Deluxe Version," a woman named Yun Hee, grabs a microphone and tells Huntrix they are being disrespectful for singing about "going rambo" and a "napalm era" in their hit song. After Yun Hee asks Huntrix to change the song and agree to not promote militaristic messages in their music, she, and her two comrades, are escorted out. Bobby cuts the press conference short. Zoey, Mira, and Rumi are not only shaken but angry that someone demanded they change the lyrics of their song. While Zoey and Mira say that the woman had a right to speak her mind, Rumi believes that the activist group wanted to damage the band's reputation. She comforts her two friends in this tense situation. Later, when she looks up the group on her phone, she learns that Yun Hee was right all along, and she starts to have feelings she never expected, causing to internally panic. At the same time, Huntrix faces a crisis of its own...

Notes

Happy May 14th! Hello everyone! Hello everyone! I began this fic in late August of last year, typing in some notes I made for the story back in July before my overseas trip. I made a decision in early October of last year, when over 4,100 words had been written, that I needed to get this fic out there. I decided that it needed to happen as soon as possible, before the year came to an end. Unfortunately, that did not happen. I have several other KPDH fics in the process, which will hopefully come out soon. I finished this fic in late April of this year after struggling with it for a while, because I wasn't sure how to end it.

I had originally planned to post this for the Finish What You Started 2026 Spring Event and finished it before the last deadline for a "Finished It Friday" (May 8th), but the mod of that event sadly never got back to me. Even so, I still wanted to post it. I had originally added "my second KPop Demon Hunters fic" as a tag, but I eschewed that tag, as it was only accurate when I first drafted this fic, but not now, as I've written, as noted on Squidge World, eleven KPDH fics to date.

The outfit that Rumi has as noted in the line "She ended up wearing a white hoodie exposing her midriff, with drawstrings, and blue jeans" is inspired by fanart by colors_tatu of "Rumi and Wednesday with their hair down" and an official video of Zoey, Mira, and Rumi releasing a "Thank You" message for "their top fans on Spotify Wrapped," which has Rumi in a white hoodie with drawstrings.

On May 13th, I lengthened the title from the original, which was "Backlash, Love, and the Horrors of War: Mira, Zoey, Rumi, and Huntrix's Dilemma." This fic has been cross-posted on Squidge World and Asian Fanfics, and will be posted on the Internet Archive soon.

As always, comments are welcome, including from K-pop fans in Korea. I think I got how the Korean constitution works in terms of freedom of speech but feel free to correct me if my interpretation here is wrong. Concrit is also welcome. Even so, negative comments on this fic, and its subject matter, will not be published.

See the end of the work for more notes

- Inspired by Coffee and Napalm by Blazil
- Inspired by Dust and Napalm by PunishedTalos
- Inspired by Napalm and Roses by 35-leukothea (35_leukothea)
- Inspired by Whiskey & Napalm by Husk_Says_No
- Inspired by Constitution of the Republic of Korea (1987) by Wikisource
- Inspired by Only Words on Paper?: Freedom of Speech & Expression in South Korea by Geoffrey Fattig
- Inspired by Freedom of speech by KoreanLII
- Inspired by Napalm in US Bombing Doctrine and Practice, 1942-1975 by Marine Guillaume
- Inspired by How One Man Helped Burn Down North Korea by Blaine Harden [for Politico]
- Inspired by 17 Typical Korean Breakfast Foods (+ Recipes) by Max [for seoulkoreaasia]
- Inspired by Napalm – A Brief History of One of Warfare's Most Fearsome Weapons by Military History Now
- Inspired by "The Americans rained fire down on the advancing Chinese. They exploded 55 gallon drums of Napalm in the midst of the attackers and blasted them with artillery." by James Elphick
- Inspired by Napalm In War by Globalsecurity
- Inspired by The Controversial History of Napalm and Its Use in War by Todd Neikirk [for War History Online]
- Inspired by "I never saw the Air Force guys come down very far. God, they'd drop napalm from enormous heights over there." [page 35] by Thomas H. Burkhalter
- Inspired by What is the 'napalm era'? Details explored as [some] fans bash KPop Demon Hunters for referencing a historical event in a lyric by PrimeTimer
- Inspired by 'KPop Demon Hunters' faces backlash [from Vietnamese fans] over 'Napalm Era' lyric amid praise for Netflix debut by The Express Tribune
- Inspired by What Does "Napalm Era" Mean in K-Pop Demon Hunters? (Fan Interpretation Explained) by KwaveBlog
- Inspired by "Extremely offensive"- Fans of KPop Demon Hunters express displeasure over film's use of 'Napalm era' in opening song by Deepti Sequeira [for sportskeeda]
- Inspired by [Restricted Work] by peachykittea
- Inspired by 'KPop Demon Hunters' Soundtrack: All 12 Tracks Ranked [HUNTR/X, "How It's Done" section] by Billboard Magazine
- Inspired by How to Talk Like a K-Pop Fan: A KPop Demon Hunters Dictionary by Stephan Lee (for Tudum)
- Inspired by Rumi in KPop Demon Hunters: Everything to Know About the Golden-Voiced Hero by Alex Frank (for Tudum)

- Inspired by All the Food in KPop Demon Hunters, from Couch Snacks to Korean Delicacies by Olivia Harrison (for Tudum)

The press conference had been going smoothly. Bobby talked about the new album Huntrix was about to release, named "How It's Done: Deluxe Version," featuring Mira, Rumi, and Zoey singing new version of the single ("How It's Done") which had been part of their meteoric rise. Out of nowhere, someone grabbed the microphone, surprising the media which assembled there. "I'd like to say something about a song if I may." Bobby, without a second thought, replied. "Okay. Please ask your question." He was used to this. The woman took a deep breath. "How can Huntrix sing about a 'napalm era' and 'going Rambo'? It's extremely disrespectful to all the people who died during the Korean War. It mocks their pain and suffering." All the cameras turned toward the woman. Behind her, two women rose a banner saying "U.S. Out of Korea, NOW!" Rumi, Mira, and Zoey looked at each other with concern. What were they going to do now?

The woman spoke into the microphone one more time. "I'm Yun Hee from K-Pop Against War. We implore Huntrix to pledge here and now to change the song 'How It's Done' and agree to not promote militaristic messages in their music. Thank you very much." The woman and the two fellow protesters beside her were escorted out by security. They left without another word. The girls were shaken. What could they say? How dare someone tell them to change their song lyrics? Who did these people think they were? Did they not know how much blood, sweat, and tears they had put into their music? Bobby had been with them long enough that he knew that something was up. When a reporter started to ask a question, Bobby stood up. "I'm sorry. We are going to have to cut the press conference short. We thank everyone for coming here today. Please address any further questions to our press agent." Reporters shouted questions and the cameras snapped as they walked off the stage. As they left, Bobby and the girls somehow avoided the reporters and paparazzi by escaping out a back door. They made their way back to Huntrix Tower. Mira, Rumi, and Zoey were sitting in their living room still in a state of shock.

Bobby broke the silence. "I'm sorry girls, I *should* have screened people who asked questions better. I'll tell the security guards be more careful next time." Mira sighed. "It's okay, Bobby. You did *nothing* wrong." Zoey followed up. "Yeah, they were just expressing their viewpoint. Under the constitution here in Korea, people have the freedom of speech, right?" Rumi spoke up, pulling out a copy of the constitution she kept in her pocket for some reason. She had been given it on the street a long time ago. Some man was giving them out to everyone that passed. "Zoe is right, that's under Article 21, which prohibits censorship. It also says that speech *cannot* violate honor, rights of other people, or 'undermine public morals or social ethics.' They are trying to destroy our reputation. That *isn't acceptable*."

Bobby wasn't sure that Rumi was right. He sighed. "I'll fix this, I promise. Just rest. We have a big day ahead." After he left, Mira, Zoey, and Rumi collapsed on the couch. Zoey almost began to cry as tears swelled on her face. Mira stroked her shoulder. "That was *so scary.* How could someone do that?" Mira shrugged. Rumi was the only one who hadn't said anything more after she'd claimed that the people who interrupted them had only been out to get Huntrix. She smiled and hugged Zoey, with Mira doing the same. They didn't say much more to each other that night. Each of them went into their separate rooms. Once she was alone, Rumi whipped out her phone. She quickly went to her favorite search engine and saw stories

related to their press conference. She ignored them. She then quickly typed in a few words: "K-Pop Against War."

She scrolled past a bunch of results about the press conference and found the official website. She knew well enough to *not trust* what the news media said. Even supposedly reputable newspapers, magazines, and TV stations had said so many vicious things about her, Zoey, and Mira, especially the despicable tabloid rags. Other outlets weren't much better. She clicked on the website. It was very interactive and colorful, much more than she had expected. Scrolling through the website, she went to the about page. It described the organization as an "anti-imperialist organization pushing K-Pop to divest from war, oppose militarism, and not promote war," named KAW for short. The site noted that they had originally wanted to use the name "K-Pop for Peace" but an organization in the U.S. had already taken that, to their chagrin.

As she read more, she came across the founder, Yun Hee, learning that she had once been a K-Pop idol herself, but had been discarded because a company had exploited her and tried to make her sing a god-awful tune about cherry colas. Looking at the picture, it almost seemed like a glamour shot. She caught herself blushing. She thought to herself, "Oh no, this girl is *hot*." She shouldn't be thinking that, *right*?

She'd never thought that about someone, at least not in this way. She'd been so close to Mira and Zoey over the years. She never thought of them in a romantic way. At least, she *never* had time to, because they were so busy with everything. However, she'd clearly been in love with that cute boy demon, Jinu. Even so, on *some level*, she had to admit that she was attracted to Zoey and Mira. She could never say it out loud. That would be a *disaster*. It could destroy their group. She felt that she had to bury it deep down inside of her.

She knew that approaching the website with her newfound crush in mind was bad. She tried to put it out of her mind, at least for now. She kept paging through the website and saw a number to call in the contact us section. Although she wanted to call, she felt almost too nervous to do so. What if Yun Hee was on the other side? The only way she could get through this was in-person. She didn't know much else.

As the night went on, she kept reading more about the use of napalm by the U.S. during the Korean War and about Rambo. She started to realize that Yun Hee may have been right after all. Was Huntrix supporting militarism? Had they made a mistake? She was starting to think so. She learned that over 32,000 tons of napalm had been dropped on Korea by the U.S. military, more than double what fell on Japan in 1945 alone. It was seen as "efficient" in taking out certain targets, since it could be used for more than obliterating tactical infrastructure but an entire area. Napalm had destroyed over 75 percent of Pyongyang and had a psychological impact on those in the northern half of Korea. Thousands were killed and many more were terrified. They'd never forgotten it. Reading all of this, she became utterly horrified.

She yawned. She was tired from reading her phone. She put it down on her beside table, closed her eyes, and crashed. She was utterly exhausted. The next day came almost too soon. She was awoken not by her friends, but by the sunlight pouring into her room. She stretched, then grabbed her phone, and stuffed a black mask and sunglasses into her pocket. She

prepared a small backpack, where she put a grey hoodie inside as something she could easily change into if needed. She had this all planned. She met Zoey and Mira in the kitchen, who were chomping down on bibimbap, a mix of rice, vegetables, seaweed, and a fried egg.

They had set aside some hot kimchi eggs for her. She loved how the tanginess of the kimchi, the flavors of the green onions and sesame seeds, and the goodness of the eggs came together. They all often ate foods like this in the morning. Unlike some Western countries where people ate pancakes and eggs, Koreans preferred breakfast foods which were more spicy and savory, consisting of soup, rice, and side dishes of many kinds. Even Zoey had gotten used to eating that way, although she was born in the U.S.

"Did you see the news? That press conference is blowing up, in *a bad way,*" Mira remarked. Zoey nodded. "Bobby said he was going to handle it. I'm fine with that." Rumi couldn't hold it in anymore. "What if that woman was right...what if..." she started to say. She wanted to test the waters. Mira and Zoey looked at her funny. Something was up. There had been a change from the day before. "Rumi, are you okay?" Mira asked. She didn't want her to hide anything again. She was angry that Rumi had hidden that she was half-demon from them. When she explained what Celine had told her, she understood. Both she and Zoey vowed to cut off Celine and with Bobby's help, they did.

Sweating profusely over Mira's question, Rumi remarked, "yeah, I am...this whole thing is just a lot." She lied, but felt she *had to*, especially since she was starting to realize that she had crushes on Mira and Zoey. Mira came close to her ear and whispered. "Okay, just please let me know if anything's wrong." Rumi jumped back, her ear turning scarlet red, surprising Mira and intriguing Zoey. They couldn't say anything more before Bobby walked into the room. "Girls, this is a code red. Huntrix is trending on social media, with Mira called 'Napalm girl' and Zoey called 'Rambo Zoey'. We are being called cowards." Hearing this, they were all infuriated, especially since they had made a policy of never going on social media, taking into account Bobby's sage advice. They were not happy. "Don't worry, *this will blow over*," he reassured them. Zoey and Mira looked at him uneasily. Rumi got up. "I'm going to take a walk." Bobby whispered to her. He was concerned she might say something bad. "*Please* don't talk to the media." She smiled back. "I don't plan on it."

She knew every way in and out of Huntrix Tower. After putting on her dark sunglasses, black face mask, and grey hoodie to conceal her identity, she snuck out the back door. She pulled out a paper from her pocket. She had scrawled down the P.O. box number. She planned to scout it out, in hopes of finding the KAW headquarters. She made her way to the post-office and sat on a nearby bench. Sure enough, a woman in a face mask and sunglasses appeared. She had the same hair color and eyes of the woman she'd seen on the KAW website the previous night. She presented her ID and picked up the mail. "Thank you, mister," she said. The post office worker nodded and she walked out.

Rumi waited a minute or two, then got up from the bench. She looked around. It was odd. She didn't see her. Something wasn’t right. She walked a little down the street. Someone jumped out of an alley. She didn't have much time to react. She could feel something against her skin. Whoever this person was, they were threatening her. This wasn't good. She had to get out of here!

She turned and saw who it was: it was Yun Hee, it *had to be*. "Miss, I'm not trying to give you any trouble. If you will just let me be on my way," she said. The woman pulled out the weapon: a taser. They had been reportedly used by the National Police Agency for many years, but the agency had never publicly stated it. Only reports from citizens confirmed it. *Was this woman a cop?* "Why were you following me? Are you from the military?," she demanded. Rumi put her hands up. She couldn't risk a fight with her. She didn't fight with humans. She fought with demons.

"No, I'm not...I just...uh..." she started to say, then grumbled. She bowed. She wanted to get out of this at any cost. "I'm sorry. I was interested in K-Pop Against War and you look like Yun Hee...I saw the P.O. box on your website." The lady was incensed. Who in the world was this woman? Was she following her? Was this a trap? "You are stalking me? I could have you reported...you would be sorry." Rumi kept her hands up. How in the world could she get out of this situation? She bowed yet again.

"I'm sorry, ma'am, I was just interested in KAW and I wanted to read some materials in person. You see, I have *certain circumstances* for why I can't show my real identity or use a cell phone to call your organization's number...you see." the woman sighed. She could see that this woman wouldn't go away easily. She rolled her eyes. "Fine. Come with me. Just please close your eyes." She held her taser at Rumi's back and began moving her forward. Rumi decided to go with her. She didn't want to fight her, not now. It could be bad. She hoped that this woman was who she seemed to be. Otherwise, she was screwed.

After walking about half a mile, she felt herself being brought inside a building, then marched up the stairs, and into another room. The woman spoke again. "You can open your eyes." She did. She was in an expertly decorated room. It had posters of K-Pop stars everywhere, including ones of Huntrix, the Saja Boys, and many others. She grimaced when seeing Saja Boys. She hated them after what they had done. She hated them with a passion.

"So, Miss, what brings you here today?" the woman asked, taking off her sunglasses and mask, revealing herself to be who Rumi guessed: Yun Hee. A bit embarrassed to be in this situation and around someone she had considered attractive online, she cleared her throat. This was going to be tough to say without revealing her true self. "I heard about your group from media reporting about that...uh...press conference...I looked into it afterward and learned about napalm use during the Korean War...it was awful. They said it 'equalized' the battlefield when they used it on soldiers from China, but also killed thousands of civilians and devastated cities. It's such a terrible weapon."

Yun Hee was surprised. This woman was that informed already? She and her comrades wanted to bring in *anyone* into the burgeoning peace movement. Why not this woman? She smiled. She began speaking. "Thank you for coming today. I'm sorry about the circumstances. We have to be careful. They could *bust us* for violating Article 21." She then added something which surprised Rumi. "We really love Huntrix. Each of us has our favorite band members, but...we want them to do their best...and to support them as fans." Rumi nodded.

She pulled out a piece of scratch paper from her pocket and scrawled down a few book names. "Here's some recommendations. You can read about the history of napalm, about how

it was used regularly during the war, and interviews with vets, but here are some books you can read to learn more." On the paper, she had listed Robert Neer's 2013 book, *Napalm: An American Biography*, William Blum's classic book, *Rogue State*, books by Chalmers Johnson, particularly *Blowback*, and finally, *A People's History of American Empire*. The latter book was an adaptation of Howard Zinn's *A People's History of the United States: 1492 to Present*. All of these books either had a major or partial focus on napalm. Although they were all English language books, they all served as a starting point before moving onto Korean-language materials.

"Just contact me personally about these materials. Then we won't have to go through all of this to meet in person." There were some other mentions of U.S. use of napalm in Korea within Michael Pembroke's "Korea: Where the American Century Began," but she didn't mention that. Rumi felt a little uneasy about this. She wanted to leave after all this awkwardness. She bowed and started to depart. She looked at the poster of Saja Boys. She sneered at those hoobae. Yun Hee found this odd. She dismissed it, thinking that she was reading too much into it. She could just not like them or something. That was okay. Everyone had their own viewpoints.

She escorted Rumi back to where the P.O. boxes were, holding her hand along the way, making her blush. She was so glad she had a mask on, as it hid her face. She was lucky that the woman didn't press her on this. She followed her instruction. She waved at her. "I'll be sure to text you, Miss," Rumi said, handing her a paper with her number on it. The woman waved back at her. Something about her seemed odd. She felt she might be over-thinking things.

Rumi ran back full-speed toward Huntrix Tower. She entered the access code, went into the elevator, and soon made her way into the apartment, and then sped into her room, quickly closing. Zoey and Mira saw her come in like a speeding bullet. They now knew that something was going on with her. She collapsed on her bed, taking off the sunglasses, mask, and grey hoodie. Her patterns on her arms were almost vibrating. *Is this what it meant for demons to feel things?* She had never felt this way before in her life. She was almost shaking. She couldn't believe she had gotten that close to Yun Hee and given her number to her. What was she doing? She didn't know.

She awaited a text message from the woman as she laid on her bed. She didn't have even a moment of peace. Zoey and Mira bust into her room, almost pushing the door off its hinges, catching her off guard. "What's going on, Rumi?" Mira asked, with Zoey following up. They were concerned about her. "This isn't like you," Zoey said. Rumi blushed. She did not want to admit it. She decided to tell part of the truth, while curling her purple hair with her finger. "I--I-I...met with someone...I-I-I had to see them in person." Zoey and Mira looked at each other. "Tell us! Who was it?" She put her head in her hands. She didn't want to say anything.

She almost looked away and said softly, "you know that person at the press conference the other day?...well I met...that person." Zoey grabbed her phone and happened to open her internet browser. Rumi was horrified. She snatched her phone back. Zoey couldn't forget the image she'd seen. It was imprinted in her mind. "Is it... perhaps... that woman from K-Pop Against War?...I think she was named Yun Chi?" Rumi interrupted her. She had to correct

her. "It's Yun Hee!" Mira laughed. "Come on. *You know Rumi* only likes boys. She obviously had a crush on Jinu. We all know that."

Rumi wasn't sure how she could tell them. It isn't always easy to come out. Maybe she was someone who developed sexual attraction after an emotional bond was formed? She didn't think so, but she was exploring it as a possibility. She didn't know if the term demisexual applied to her, or not, as she was still figuring what label worked for her. Or maybe no set labels directly described her. She was still figuring it out. "Mir, sorry to disappoint you. It was *a woman*. It was..." She paused and breathed deeply. "Yun Hee...I just find her...*very attractive*." Mira was surprised. She had never thought Rumi would say that. Zoey came close to Rumi, examining her closely, causing her to jump back.

"So...you like girls and boys...so you're bi?" Zoey asked, clearly inquisitive. The purple-haired girl shrugged, then began to cry. She looked at her concerned friend through her tears. Why was this so hard? Why was it so hard to show who you truly are? She had struggled so much with showing her arms off in public. Sometimes she even felt she had to cover herself up. What Celine had done to her over the years and how she had treated her, had become ingrained in her being. "I don't know, Zoe? *I don't know*!...I might even have feelings for you and Mir...I'm still figuring it out," she said, while still sobbing. "I'm so sorry if this makes you uncomfortable."

To her surprise, Mira and Zoey started crying too. They came close and hugged her. She hugged them back. They all had a good cry together. They embraced one another. After a while, they brought her out to the main living room area. "Thanks for telling us, Rumi," Mira said, then sighed. This would he hard for her to say. She didn't want to steal her friend's thunder, as to say. Rather, she wanted her to know that she wasn't alone. She wanted to make her feel better about herself. "So, uh, more than once, I've thought of kissing you...not just as a friend...but as a partner."

Rumi's eyes opened wide. Mira had been thinking of her that way too? She had no idea. It made her feel seen, but also curious at the same time. "Thanks for saying that, Mir...I feel *a little better* now." She and Mira looked at Zoey who held her arms up. They started to corner her. They did the wall slam on either side of her and she chirped. "Eep!" she said, looking terrified. She grumbled. "I don't know," she started to say, then shouted, "I have wanted to kiss you both, like *ALL the damn time*! You are both so cute! I've thought that way for so long. Does that make you happy! There, I said it!" Mira and Rumi did not expect she'd be so forthright about this. They motioned her to the couch. They had a lot to talk about, now. She followed their lead. They all sat down and breathed deeply. This was a lot to take in.

"Okay, so if I got this right, you both want to...kiss me...and like me...like *romantically*?" Mira and Zoey nodded. She looked at them and nodded. She didn't know what to tell them. "We'll make sure this doesn't change anything between us...right?...we are still best buds." Mira and Zoey smiled. "Yes! Best buds!," with Zoey adding as an adjoiner, "who kiss each other *sometimes*." Mira and Rumi nodded. Rumi put her head in her hands. She didn't want to interrupt this. There was a big issue they had to handle. "Can we put a pin in this uh 'whether we are all girlfriends' thing for a second...I want to know what I should do about Yun Hee. You see, I gave her my number. She doesn't know its me...can you *please please* help me?"

Mira grinned. She put her arm around her. "I'll do anything for you," then adding, "as long as you *kiss me later*." Rumi rolled her eyes. "Fine, fine." Zoey piped in. "Yeah same here."

She flashed back to what Rumi had said at breakfast. "Wait, wait, is that why you said that woman might be right about what she said...earlier?" Rumi shook her head from side to side. It wasn't that at all. Zoey wasn't right. She was getting it wrong. That wasn't it... right? "No, no, no. So, I read the K-Pop Against War website last night, saw her picture and uh... well, found her hot... and uh... I looked into this whole napalm thing and it's totally legit...*she was right*." Mira sighed. She had been the one who had added in the line "Fit check for my napalm era." Zoey had added the line "But when shootin' my words, I go Rambo." They usually worked on these songs together in a true collaboration. "You're not kiddin' me right now, Rumi? This is the true-true, right?" Rumi nodded. She stretched back and groaned. She was *so glad* that Bobby wasn't there. She almost shouted. "This is *such a clusterfuck*."

Rumi agreed, as did Zoey. Wanting to steer the conversation in another direction to get advice, wanting to get away from this, at least for now, she said, "w--ww---what about Yun Hee? I mean I like her...but if I tell her my real identity...then...won't it all be over?" Zoey held her hand, as did Mira. This time the former was the one she gave advice to. After all, their last big song had been all about being open. "Just do what feels right...don't push yourself...*be true to yourself*." Rumi felt a relief. She was glad she talked to them. She felt happy. With all of these euphoric feelings, she couldn't stop herself from planting a kiss on Zoey's cheek. "Thanks for saying that." Zoey's face got extremely red. So many thoughts were going through her mind. Rumi had kissed her? She was flabbergasted. She didn't know how to respond.

Mira chuckled. "Wow, homegirl is getting *bold* now," she said, as she did the same, placing a smacker on Rumi's cheek. Zoey didn't want to lose out to her, so she kissed the other cheek. Rumi smiled happily. She wrapped her arms around both girls, holding them closely. She really loved Zoey and Mira. "Okay, okay now," she said, her face completely flushed. Her patterns were pulsating a pinkish color. "I need to deal with this Yun Hee business first...then we can...uh figure out where...romance between us...or whatever it is...goes from here..." Zoey and Mira nodded. "Yeah, that makes sense," the latter said. Zoey just added, "uh-huh."

As they continued chattering, they started talking about how to change the lyrics, what to put in the place of "napalm" and if they should replace the word "Rambo" or not. They didn't want to make it seem like they were giving in and were weak-willed. Their artistic integrity was important. Even so, they never wanted their songs to hurt other people. How could they be demon hunters helping humankind if that was the case? That would be totally wrong.

Just then, Rumi's phone dinged. It was a message from an unknown number. She was skeptical. She opened it. The text read as follows, which she decided to read aloud:

> "Hi, this is Yun Hee. Thank you so much for coming over today, Miss...I appreciate your interest in K-Pop Against War. Let me know when you've read the books I've recommended. I'd love to chat sometime. In solidarity, Yun.
>
> P.S. I really loved your hoodie, hat, and black mask. It was a cool sheik look."

Rumi was *totally losing it*. This woman had told her she wanted to talk *and* praised what she was wearing. She was unsure what to do. She had to meet her. She couldn't delay any longer.

"Zoe, Mir, what should I tell her?...I've never done something like this before...I *really really* don't wanna mess it up." Her friends gave her suggestions. Taking them into consideration, she decided to answer Yun Hee in the best way possible. She typed back, thanking her for a kind message. She asked that they meet in-person.

After texting back and forth for what seemed like hours, but was actually only thirty minutes, Rumi selectively shared parts of her life with Yun. They connected on how much they loved Huntrix, although for Rumi, she could say things that made her seem like a mega-fan rather than the band's center. This allowed her to avoid revealing her true identity. This strategy seemed to be working. She was glad.

As the day went on, the girls met with Bobby again. He noted that some social media users were saying that their song was now "insensitive," particularly those in Vietnam, where hundreds of thousands of tons of napalm had been dropped by the U.S. military between 1963 and 1973. Others were defending them, declaring that the words "napalm era," referred to history by painting a vivid picture. Mira sighed. She wasn't sure what to make of this back-and-forth on social media, and did not want to take a side. "I just thought it sounded *cool*...I never knew about the history or anything...I totally understand why people find it disgusting, or are...confused by it." She went onto say that the song was about how they are all just girls behind all the fame and everything. Zoey and Rumi nodded along. They couldn't agree more. The song was not intended on making a political statement.

"Yeah, Mir is right. We just wanted derive confidence and power from makeup, heels, and other traditionally feminine stuff...you know…" Zoey piped up. "I mean we are badass feminist demon hunters...of course we are gonna focus on masculine stuff and hyperfemininity…maybe we really are femme fatales *or something*, dunno." Bobby left. He told them he'd meet with them later in the day. They all agreed to take a break at least until this mess sorted itself out.

After he departed, Mira and Zoey were ready to assist Rumi in preparing for this meeting with Yun. They helped her find just the right outfit to wear. She was extremely nervous, but they helped her the whole way. She deeply appreciated it. They convinced her to cover up, *for now,* until she met Yun in a private space, because paparazzi might be watching. She was willing to go along with it for the time being. She ended up wearing a white hoodie exposing her midriff, with drawstrings, and blue jeans. It was casual and nothing too fancy. She wore black sunglasses, and a black face mask to further cover her face. She couldn't let Yun see who she *truly* was.

She sent Yun a text, noting what she would be wearing, so she could recognize her. Yun did the same, as she'd also be wearing a face mask. She was ready. They met out in an open place, before Yun guided her to a secluded coffee shop. Yun knew the owner, who was an ally of the peace movement. She led her to the break room. It was reserved for them to talk. Yun took off her mask. Rumi refused to do the same.

"So, why'd call me here today?" the ex-popstar asked. Rumi didn't know how to answer. She was usually the confident, witty, and fearless one. However, she had kept Zoey and Mira at a

distance. She did not want them to learn she was half-demon, which had cost her dearly, nearly destroying their friendship and the band itself. This was different. She wasn't keeping anyone away. Instead, she did her best to hide her true romantic feelings, embodying her tendency to be secretive and self-conscious at times. That served her well, in this case, at least she thought so.

"I wanted to thank you for yesterday and everything you said about Huntrix...it means a lot." Yun nodded. She looked at Rumi's outfit and almost laughed. This was something she didn't want to hear from a woman she had a crush on. "It's my pleasure. Did you think we were going on a date or something?" Rumi became immediately flushed. She started to stutter. How could she explain herself? She struggled with it.

"I...uh...well...my friends...you know…" Her words escaped her. Why was she being like this? She could be better! She wouldn't let this fall apart. She started to get up, preparing to leave, to escape this embarrassment. Yun's soft hand encouraged her to sit back down. She decided to stay. As she did, she started to cry. The other woman didn't know what to do. She wiped the tears. Her mask became so wet, plus the sweat on her face, it fell off and onto the table. Rumi instinctively put her hand over her face, trying her best to hide who she was. She really hoped that Yun had not seen her.

Her hope was dashed. Yun had seen it. She was very attentive with details was this. She was surprised. Was this who she thought it was? Or were her eyes deceiving her? She ha to ask. "Are you...Rumi, *by chance*?" The purple-haired girl nodded. Trying to hide it now would be nearly impossible. "Yeah. I'm sorry for not telling you the truth...I thought…" Yun shook her head. She understood as someone who had once been a k-pop star. These sorts of relationships were usually not allowed and such meetings were a no-no. She must have a lot of freedom in her girl band, Huntrix, to be exact. That must be why…

"I meant what I said the other day...and my friends agree with you...So, I came here because I...uh...think you are really pretty...and I *like you*…" Yun didn't know what to think when she heard this. She chuckled a little, then stopped. She knew how difficult it was when young women were struggling with their identities. She had been through some of the same experiences herself. She sighed. "Well...thanks...*I'm bi*...and I've had my share of terribleness over the years." Rumi blurted out a response. She couldn't stop herself. She was so excited to make this connection. "Me too! I'm still figuring it all out, but maybe we can help each other."

Yun was listening. She was still trying to process all of this. As she did, she was barely holding in her excitement, trying to remain as calm as she could. She had never thought that *her idol,* the woman she loved as a fan, enjoying her music and artistry, would say that she was bisexual. She had guessed that Rumi might be queer and had talked about it to fans. But such guesses would be complete and pure speculation. After all, people make such claims about many celebrities all the time. She had no intention of revealing this. She knew that outing someone without their consent was wrong and dangerous.

She tried her best to redirect the conversation. "Rumi, don't worry, I'm not going to tell *anyone* about you being bi. I would never do that do you in a million years. However, I would like to talk to Zoey and Mira...maybe we can work out something to change the song?

Is that possible?" The purple-haired girl stared at her. She was glad that Yun wasn't going to tell anyone, as she had accidentally told this woman she was bi. Even so, trying to change a chart-topping song, could be difficult. They couldn't just pull a song like that. And how would they present it so people didn't think they were "giving in"?

Rumi sighed. "I can surely set up a meeting with them…but I can't promise anything...changing a song...it could be a challenge." Yun realized that. When she'd led a protest criticizing How It's Done, she, primarily, wanted to raise awareness. She had *no idea* that it could actually lead to a change. She never believed that would happen. Rumi paused. "And just so you know, Zoe and Mir already know I'm bi. I came out to them. So you are the *third person* who knows."

Not long after, Rumi typed away on her phone. She told Zoey and Mira to come to the coffee shop, the same one she was in with Yun. She'd lead them to the break room, so they could discuss something. Mira ended up calling her, finding this all very suspicious. "Rumi, *what's going on*?" She spoke in a whispered tone, saying that she was meeting Yun there, and that she had asked to meet with them about possibly changing the song. Mira wasn't sure about this. She wondered how in the world they'd get there without being spotted. That was always a danger. Rumi reassured her it would be fine, as long as she wore certain clothes and left Huntrix Tower out the secret exit, as they always did.

In no time at all, Mira and Zoey appeared at the cafe. Rumi led them to the break room. Zoey had her notebooks in toe. As sat there, Zoey grumbled. "Well, if we don't use the word 'napalm' what about 'bombshell'?" Rumi and Mira shook their heads. She proposed the words atomic, explosive, savage, ardent, and fervent. She had three other choices. "What about fiery, fierce, or ferocious?" she asked.

That didn't seem to work either. The song's lyrics had to work in such a way it could come together when it was read or sung. It had to all fit together. She scratched her head. Just then it came to her. The idea popped into her head. She whispered it. "What about 'red hot'? The lyric would be 'Fit check for my red-hot era'?" Mira and Rumi liked that. She started to think about the other lyric. If she wasn't going to sing "But when shootin' my words, I go Rambo," she wondered what could possibly replace it. Rumi came up with the idea. "For that other lyric, how about, instead of 'I go Rambo,' maybe sing 'I go charging like a wild lambo.'"

Mira and Zoey looked at her strangely. What in the hell was *a lambo*? They thought it was the colloquial name for a lamborghini. That was true. That wasn't what Rumi was talking about, at all. "Uh, well, I was reading some site...and learned it's Malagasy for a wild boar...and domestic pig...it has some other meaning which is bad." Mira and Zoey shrugged. They couldn't come up with anything better. This would have to do for now. They could choose the final word later. Next, they'd have to convince Bobby to make this change and market it in such a way that they still looked like they were *keeping* their artistic (and creative) integrity, which they were. Yun would never take that away from the girls.

Zoey pulled out her phone. She called their manager. He answered the phone. "Zoey, what is it? I'm still trying to fix everything that's going on with this new song...I'm a bit busy right now, you know." She grinned. She twirled her hair. "Well, Bobby, I might have the answer to

that problem. Can we meet at the tower?" He sighed. He hoped this would be okay. "I can do that. We'll meet in '30." He hung up. Now, all they had to do was get back. Yun said she'd tell the other group members to meet them there. The three girls would return in the ways they knew how. They had become experts with this kind of thing.

"See you there, Yun. Text me when you are outside the tower." Yun nodded. She knew what Rumi meant without even asking a follow-up question: she was referring to Huntrix Tower. As they went their separate ways, they prepared for this momentous meeting of sorts. As Zoey and Mira wondered how they would explain this to Bobby, she whispered to them. She wanted to make one thing clear. "Don't tell him I have a crush on her! If you do, well, then it will look like I have a conflict of interest... I think...Can you please say nothing about that?" They both nodded. They had her back.

Not even ten minutes later they had made it back to the tower. The paparazzi were not there. They were too busy chasing other celebrities, including one Korean-American girl who was somehow conjuring fire out of nothing. If they had been there, this all might have been completely ruined. Using the secret code they had memorized, each one went inside. Not long afterward, Rumi received a text on her phone. "We're here." She told her friends to go ahead to the conference room, where they had all the big meetings. With everything that had happened, Celine never attended those anymore, since she'd been cut off. Instead, it was usually just Bobby and other people who worked for the agency.

Opening the door, Rumi ushered in Yun and her friends, all of whom were part of KAW. She closed the door behind them, then led them to the nearby elevator. Once they all go off at the right floor, she brought them to the conference room, where Mira and Zoey were waiting. Before they sat down, Bobby entered the room. They got up, bowed to him, as was customary, then took their seats.

"So, what you girls have for me today? Who are these lovely women with us today?" Rumi answered. "So, Bobby, we are here to talk about a possible solution to the issues around some of the lyrics of 'How It's Done.'" She paused. "As for these women, I'll let them to explain themselves." Yun spoke on behalf of herself and the three other group members, all of whom looked to be the same age as her, which seemed to be their early 30s. In contrast, Rumi, Zoey, and Mira were all 20-somethings, with Rumi and Mira around the same age, at 23, and Zoey at age 22. They wore face masks, except for her, as they did not want to be revealed on camera.

"We are K-Pop Against War. We are the ones who asked you to not use militaristic themes in your band's music. We thank you so much for your time today." Bobby understood. He started the meeting. He asked the girls what they had proposed. "Well, I was thinking we change a few lyrics changes. Instead of saying 'Fit check for my napalm era' we sing 'Fit check for my red-hot era' and rather than singing 'But when shootin' my words, I go Rambo,' I sing 'But when shootin' my words, I go charging like a wild lambo.'" Bobby was nodding along. He liked where this was going.

"Zoey, those ideas sound great." He turned to Mira and Rumi. "Any other ideas for how we promote this?" Mira scratched her head. "We could market it is an exclusive, like a remix or something, to get people interested." Bobby liked that. He wanted to do right for the girls. He

wanted to make sure they were shielded from anything which made them look bad. He hated when people slandered them. It made him sad inside.

"Okay, I'll get staff working on that, and start to prep the marketing. Girls, you'll need to record the updated song, then we can get it to the mix artists, and everyone else, so it can be finished as soon as possible." They were happy he was so agreeable. "Thanks so much, Bobby." As he started to go, Rumi spoke next. "Wait. I'd like to make these women our consultants on these kinds of things, so that this doesn't happen again, you know. Can you arrange that, Bobby?" He thought that was a brilliant idea. He could see, once more, why *she* was the leader of the group. "Sure, I can do that, Rumi. Have a good day, girls! It was a pleasure meeting the rest of you as well." They got up and bowed toward him.

After this ended, Rumi approached the group. "Do you want to come into our music studio? You can help us come up with the right lyrics." The women looked at each other. None of them had never thought their protesting would get this far, so they were a bit unprepared. They talked among each other. This all seemed so unbelievable, like it was a dream come true, as they all were big Huntrix fangirls.

"We are okay with it *if* your other band members think it's fine." Mira and Zoey shrugged. "Sure, yeah, it's okay," they both said in unison. On the way there, Yun told them about how horrible napalm was, how its chemical odor would fill your nostrils, how it caused such pain when it hit your skin, burning it intensely, and how horrific it was. This wasn't the best conversation for meeting someone for the first time, of course. Despite that, she really wanted to get her point across in a direct way. Zoey and Mira knew none of that when they'd agreed to add the word. They'd only used it because it sounded "cool." They had been incredibly foolish.

As the day went on, Mira, Zoey, Rumi, and the KAW members vibed with one another about how to make the song better, having such synergy. What they came up with would certainly change people's impressions, perhaps of their band as a whole. They were ready to do what was right and make sure that their music was something that would strengthen the Honmoon in such a way that was healthy, life-affirming, and empowering all at the same time...

End Notes

There are ten KPDH fics out there, right now, which mention the word napalm. While these stories are good, none of them mentions the word "napalm" in a critical way. For instance, one uses "fit check for my napalm era" as a tag, two have Mira using variations of the term "napalmera" as her gaming username and chatname. There's even a user on AO3 who uses "napalm_era" as part of their username.

I originally planned to publish this story on Give Someone a Dollar Day, a day where you can "give a dollar to someone you know or someone you've never met...[or] to anyone who appears to be in need or deserves it," but that day did not seem to fit this fic, so I decided to not do so. Otherwise, the name Yun Hee comes from here, which lists Korean girl names. Apart from all of that, this fic was partially inspired by Angela Chen's "Ace: What Asexuality Reveals About Desire, Society, and the Meaning of Sex," which I have been reading and still have not finished.

Although I read fics like "Toxic Love: Napalm Drops" by Art3mi and "Napalm Blues" by Napalm_Man which mentioned napalm, those were not an inspiration. However, parts of "Coffee and Napalm" by Blazil, "Dust and Napalm" [chapter 7 ("FUBAR")] by PunishedTalos, "Napalm and Roses" by 35-leukothea (35_leukothea) and "Whiskey & Napalm" by Husk_Says_No were inspirations although they are in different fandoms.

I also had some notes about a web search I did for "article 21 south korea constitution free speech," a Google Doc press release entitled "Closing Military Bases Overseas Will Save Billions and Improve National Security, Say Experts in Open Letter to President Trump," the demands of U.S. Out of Korea ("...full and permanent withdrawal of US troops and weapons systems from Korea...all Korean land, water, and airspace appropriated for the US military...returned to the Korean people...an end to all US-South Korea alliances, including the JAKUS trilateral security cooperation…an end to all US-South Korea joint command structures—the Combined Forces Command, and the UN Command...an end to all US military exercises in Korea…[an end to] all sanctions against North Korea...the US government divert[ing] spending from war, prisons, and policing...[and funding instead,] housing, education, healthcare, and climate justice for working people"), two Truthout articles ("Taking the Long View: Why South Korea's Peace Movement Refuses to Give Up" and "Under a New South Korean President, Can Peace Activists Push US Troops Out?"), plus articles entitled "Fighting for reparations for Korea's camptown women before it's too late" and "Chronicle of the Korean Movement against War and for Peace". In my notes, I further had a link to Wikipedia category entitled "Peace organizations based in the United States" to get some ideas for group names.

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